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CHICAGO, April 16, 1868.

DEAR COMMONWEALTH: The polytheistic tendency of radicalism develops itself in the appointment of solemn fasts (?) to preserve the memory of its martyrs. That tendency has succeeded in wedging in the country's calendar a day known as *Assassination-day*. It was observed in this most loyal of cities in the usual way. Chicago cannot yet grasp the idea of a fast-day. At a boot-blacks' mission school in the city, not long ago, the serious illness of the superintendent was announced. To the astonishment of the officers of the school, most of the boys began to stamp on the floor, as if in applause. Being remonstrated with, they explained that they were showing their sympathy.

In observing fasts, the people of Chicago laugh a little more than usual, and eat a little more than usual. During the war, the fast-days were the most hilarious of the season, and a generally distorted idea seemed to prevail as to their significance.

There was but a slight suspension of business on yesterday, and that was confined to the public offices. In three of the churches special services were held. Dr. Hatfield, a Methodist Radical, pastor of the Centenary Church on the West Side, delivered one of his characteristic "sermons for the hour," in which all the evils afflicting the land were attributed to the fact that "the spirit of slavery still lives." (When will they get a new expression?) A fine discourse might be expected from this quarter, for the "earnest" Hatfield is an active participant in "impeachment" meetings. The Rev. Dr. Burns, an imported pastor, and an abolitionist such as Scotchmen only can become, delivered from his pulpit a discourse upon "The Life and Services of Abraham Lincoln." It is not a little singular that, in the face of Mr. Herndon's candid analysis of Lincoln's religious belief, ministers, and especially Presbyterian ministers, should confidently announce his to be a *spotless Christ*. Mr. Herndon decided-ly says that Lincoln was a Universalist, and quotes his strong condemnation of the orthodox and Calvinistic creed. Yet, in the face of this, and overlooking the place of Lincoln's death, it seems to be the endeavor of men like Dr. Burns, to apotheosize him. The papal tendencies of the religious Radicals are becoming every day more apparent. They create saints with a greater rapidity.

We are to have next month the meeting of the General Conference of the Methodist Church, in our city. All the great gins of Methodism are to appear. Many of those who used to come up every four years to hurl anathemas at slavery, and the South generally, will be there. I suppose they will wake up some of the ghosts in order to ventilate their spleen. As long as they, one and all, insist that "the spirit of slavery still lives," they will find healthy occupation for their lungs. The great question to be discussed is lay representation and the admission of colored brethren.

The Northwestern Theological Seminary, among its graduates this spring, gives a missionary to Japan. Mr. C. Jones and his young wife, sail this month for their future home. I had the pleasure of hearing Mr. L. preach on the Sabbath morning before last. A brave sermon, too, it was, on the suggestive appeal of Paul: "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies, a living sacrifice, which is your reasonable service."

There is very little interest taken, comparatively speaking, in foreign missions. The Board is short of funds—some forty thousand dollars. Some years ago children were educated to give to foreign missions. Now you do not hear the subject mentioned in nine-tenths of the Sabbath schools of the land; and the ministers in the pulpit seem to have given the heathen over to their idolatries. It seems natural too, when, in our own land, there are such fearful gaps of religious desolation: such terrible moral wastes, all calling for "more men." And they need them. Oh! they need them! The ambition of most of the graduates of our Theological Seminaries, leads them to seek positions as pastors of city churches, or large wealthy country churches. It is as unsanctified as it is pernicious.

This immense Western country which is being rapidly thrown open to all men, shows but "here and there a traveler" to the celestial city—few standing in the ways and calling to the "old paths." All this, truly,

should lead us all, as individuals, to "work while it is day." And who is to work dare say? "I do not see what work I have to do." MYCOSIUS.

Pastoral Reminiscences and Observations.

When I was first settled as a pastor, it was over two churches, both of which together covered a large territory. The people were kind in their feelings toward their young pastor, and were always urging him to visit them. This I tried to do, pastorally, as often as duty and ability allowed. But to have fully gratified their wishes, I would have spent a large portion of each year riding over this wide region. I must have neglected my studies, and possibly have formed habits of mental idleness, ruinous to growth in knowledge and ministerial fitness.

I have observed that most church people, everywhere, are extremely defective in a proper knowledge of the proper and necessary use of a minister's time; and, consequently, are most unreasonable in their demands upon him in this respect. They seem to think that a young minister comes out full fledged, and having at complete command all the vast and varied themes of pulpit life. They expect to be instructed, to be profited, and to be entertained by the public services of their minister. And after he has shaken the sermons of the Sabbath out of his sleeve, as they suppose, they expect him to spend the rest of the week in visiting socially about among them. If this is not done, they do not consider that selfish gratification lies at the bottom of all their complaints and fault-findings as to this matter. They do not consider that if their pastor visits them once a month, they will complain that he does not do it twice in that period.

They will encourage him in almost any other department of his duties, except in his energetic and persevering student life. This they do not fathom nor appreciate. And yet, by the blessing of God upon it, this is the very fountain of his pulpit power, and the stream by which he makes glad the city of God. This is the spot—his study—on which he grows into an able minister of the Word, as well as into a man of great and varied knowledge. If the people find that their minister is a man of conscience, fidelity, and close study; if he grows in depth, variety, and comprehensiveness of thought and knowledge, they must concede much to him; nor attempt to interfere with these great results of a studious life.

Nothing can compensate for the want of early and widely prosecuted studies. To hear an old minister rattling away, like dry beans in a dry gourd, is a humiliating instance of unfaithfulness to early studies. Mr. A. was an admirable pastor, moving among the people, and was much loved and honored on that account. But even this was inadequate to supply the place of pulpit power and wealth. A minister in the waning season of life, and poor in the riches of original scholarship, and more so in the treasures of wide and protracted studies and well digested knowledge, fails to feed and to satisfy his people. A wanderer about the world may do with little, but a long settled pastor must have treasures to go on, and must be always increasing them, and ever changing the richness and beauties of the gospel kaleidoscope. And all pastors, especially as they grow old, who have never wrought deeply nor extensively in the mines of biblical and general knowledge, will find themselves failing to supply the demands of their positions, as did Mr. A.

If the churches want their pastors to be able ministers of the Word, let their demands upon their time be measured, not by self-gratification, but by that reason and moderation which comprehend the wide extent and various work of the ministry.

Every church, where it is possible and proper, should see to it that they have a house for their minister, commonly called a *study*, neat and convenient, where they can put a library of their own for his use and their benefit. This would be permanent for a succession of pastors, and would always save them the expense of books, which mostly they are poorly able to bear. It would also be as strong but pleasant hint of what the people expected of their ministers.

A minister must cultivate a tender spirit. If he does this so as to carry a savor andunction into his work, he will have far more weight than other men. This is the result of a devotional habit. To affect feeling is nauseous and soon detected; but to feel is the readiest way to the hearts of others.—Richard Cecil.

For the Free Christian Commonwealth.

Rev. E. P. Humphrey, D. D.

DEAR SIR: You came into our midst a young man, a stranger; a young man of promise. Kentucky received you with open arms, and in advance gave you her confidence, with kindly greetings from hearts sincere. As time and intercourse progressed, she gave you connections, wide spread, of her respected and renowned citizens, and with them wealth and position. She served you well. None envied you your commanding eminence. When Kentucky's religious community deemed it important to her interest and to the interest of the religion she professed, to have a Theological Seminary of her own, separated from the erratic isms of the North, she had you appointed one of its Professors. You filled the place to the satisfaction of the community. When the General Assembly swung off from her known legitimate moorings, you were with us in an attempt to have her right herself. We notified her of the misstep she had taken. Your voice was with ours in calling upon her to pause. Your vote was with ours in censuring her course. We counted upon you as one who would adhere to the Presbyterian Church, as a church strictly adhering to all her constitutional obligations, whose members were servative on the binding force of the promise made to be faithful in maintaining the purity and peace of the Church. As such, we had supposed that you would, and it would have been a proud day to us, had you (as did Dr. Boardman) stood up in the General Assembly at St. Louis and battled for the right, for the maintenance of that visible written Constitution which holds us together here as visible members of Christ's living body, thereby hoping to further each other in our pilgrimage through a wilderness of many and subtle enemies. You might have been, as Dr. Boardman was, rebuffed by men who, in nightly secret convulsions, had resolved that Kentucky should feel the keenest lash of the snail.

The *ipso facto* edict to all who shelter behind it, is like the handful of sand that covers the head of the poor mistaken ostrich. You, my Brother, and one or two others could have saved all of the Kentucky Synod, and had her, as it were, anchored within the veil, until these calamities were overpast; and then the straying brethren, becoming tired of following the multitude to do evil, would have known where to find Kentucky. Yes, Kentucky; a body for more than eighty years having annually met together as members of the same body, of the same faith, first as a Presbytery and then as a Synod. She was a body that had spoken and was heard. She was a body that had a right to speak, and ought to have been heard. As a united body, she could have afforded to stand still until the ark was ready and ordered to move.

For all that Kentucky has done for you, Dr. Humphrey, she does not claim the right to control your opinions, nor to interfere with your actions. But she has a right to express disappointment. She did not expect you to stand up in an *ipso facto* Presbytery, and then and there, for that Presbytery stand forth face to face with the Church and the country, solemnly protesting against the judgment of the Court of Appeals, and the doctrines proposed in its written opinion.

If I am one of the community, I may feel called upon to accept or to deny the position you have taken.

Your paper, the *Western Presbyterian*, had, before your protest, advised resistance to this decision, even to blood—and again even to death. This was not enough; you must come with all the weight of character which you possess, and, as if commissioned to call spirits from the vasty deep, call upon all Christians and all mankind to stop the wheels of government, and by your breath to brush from office the last, best hope of freedom, the court, the civil court of last resort, to whom we all look for protection from not only civil but religious tyranny. You weigh yourself against men, at least half of whom have grown with the growth of Kentucky, of parentage planted here before Presbyterian courts had an existence here—men who have made the law and its study their life duty—one of them old in years, old in experience, old in legal disposition, with no borrowed weight of character, no need of surroundings to enable him to stand face to face, tallest among the tall, with wise men of renown. Such men will respect their oaths of office, and scrupulously guard them from shade of shame as from a stain. Excuse me for leaving a blank; I will not humiliate the Court by the comparison. Our ecclesiastical courts would do well to remember that they, too, have vows upon them. You, Doctor, have intruded yourself into this presence. It may be that you are not the man you took yourself to be.

You deny that it is competent for the courts of law to revise the judgment of the spiritual courts, or control any of the secular consequences thereof.

I affirm that where, by the laws of the land, spiritual officers, as such, hold real estate for the use of others, that the officers of the civil law are bound whenever appealed to by the interested party, to inquire into the appointment of that officer. If that officer was not appointed according to the usages of his church, he cannot convey a safe title to the purchaser of the real estate. If he cannot convey a good title, how can he hold and control the same?

The civil courts do not expect the spiritual courts to inquire of them who shall or shall not distribute their sacramental elements. But they do expect them to be careful to make a faithful distribution of the lands and tenements committed to them for special purposes.

You deny that the civil courts have authority to look into the election of ruling elders, touching the validity of such election.

We affirm that a ruling elder must be legally elected according to the constitution of his church before he can make a good title to property vested in the members of said church, and that the purchaser of such property has a right to require the decision of the spiritual courts to pass upon such election.

The officers of every church are bound to appear in the courts of law, and to defend their rights.

With reference to the case of the Commonwealth, we rest this case, committing that cause to the mature judgment of the legal profession, to the common sense and honest understanding of the people, to the settled convictions of our Christian brethren of every denomination, as they are the lovers of truth and liberty, and above all to Him who is at once King in Zion and head over all things to this Church.

I. O. U. O.

For the Free Christian Commonwealth.

Homily, No. 5.

"For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Matt. 11: 30.

The yoke and burden are Christ's, and imply subjection to Him, and active obedience in his service. Such as take the yoke of Christ upon them and learn of Him, will certainly find his yoke easy, his burden light, and that the easiest, and indeed the only safe and pleasant way of getting to heaven, is to run in the way. And as the path is straight and narrow, they must in order to secure speed, have the balm of Gilead, and the great Physician, ready in every case of emergency; lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset them, and run the race set before them, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith. But in order to realize fully, that the yoke of Christ is easy, and his burden light, Christians must fight as well as run; must be strong as well as swift. They must be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might; must "put on the whole armor of God, that (they) may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For (they) wrestle not against flesh and blood; but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against evil spirits, who are high in the air, boasting in their own mind, as they preside over the world, and are busy about in the air, vainly opposing themselves to the truth, lest there should come to nothing the counsel of God." (Eph. 6: 12.)

When the Lord's day arrived, every Christian would be found at his post, strong in the Lord, and fully armed. The minister's hands would be held up by believing, fervent prayer, and with lips touched with a live coal from the altar, he would rightly divide the word of God, giving every one a portion in due season; and as his message was delivered, it would be borne on the wings of believing, fervent prayer, from every Christian heart, to God, for his blessing. In answer to such prayer, and the use of his own means, God will make the religion of the type of Hampton, rather than of the Independent. Especially was his character unlike that of the Independent. Sincerely, J. T.

Stonewall Jackson, Cromwell and Hav-
elock.

He has often been compared to Cromwell and to Havelock, but without justice in either case. The latter he certainly resembled in energy, in directness, in bravery, and in the vigor of his faith; but his spiritual character was far more symmetrical, mellow, and noble. His ambition was more thoroughly chastened. He had risen to a calm and holy superiority to all the glitter of military glory, to which Havelock never attained. Had Jackson reared sons to succeed to his name, he would never, like him, have directed them to the bustling pursuits of arms in preference to the sacred office of the gospel ministry. He would have said that, if his sons were clearly called by the providence of God to fight, and even to die, for the necessary defence of their country, then he should desire to see them brave soldiers; but that otherwise, his warmest wish for them would be that they might share the honor of winning souls, the calling which he most coveted for himself. Nor had he, either in manners or character, any of that abnormal vivacity which made Havelock as peculiar as he was great. The field on which his military genius was displayed, and the armies he wielded were so large compared with those of the British Captain, that a comparison on this point would be equally difficult and unfair.

To liken Jackson with Cromwell is far more incorrect. With all of the genius, both military and civil, and all of the iron will of the Lord Protector, he had a moral and spiritual character so much more noble that they cannot be named together. In place of harboring Cromwell's selfish ambition, which, under the veil of a religiousness that perhaps concealed it from himself, grew to the end, and fixed the foulest stain upon his memory, Jackson eradicated the not ignoble thirst for glory which animated his youth, until his abnegation of self became as pure and magnanimous as that of Washington. Cromwell's religion was essentially fanatical; and until it was chilled by an influence as malign as fanaticism itself—the lust of power—it was disorganizing. Every fibre of Jackson's being, as formed by nature and grace alike, was antagonistic to fanaticism and radicalism. He believed indeed in the glorious doctrines of providence and redemption, with an appropriating faith; he believed in his own spiritual life and communion with God through His grace, and lived upon the Scripture promises; but he would never have mistaken the heated impulse of excitement for the inspirations of the Holy Ghost, to be asserted even beyond and against His own revealed word; nor would he have ever presumed on such a profane interpretation of His secret will as to conclude that the victory of Duibar was sufficient proof, without the teachings of scriptural principles of duty, of the righteousness of the invasion of Scotland. There was never, in Jackson's piety, a particle of that false heat which could prompt a wish to intrude into clerical functions. Every instinct of his soul approved the beauty of a regular and righteous order. His religion was of the type of Hampton, rather than of the Independent. Especially was his character unlike that of the Independent. Sincerely, J. T.

ness its power, ministers and church members would come from afar, and bring with them the lame, halt, and blind, and learning that obedience to the requirements of divine truth, was the secret of their blessedness and power, would return and seek similar blessings, by the use of similar means. While, therefore, such a church would bask in the sunbeams of God's love, and enjoy his favor and friendship, it would, as good heaven, exert a saving influence throughout the earth. It would put in motion tides of eternal life, that would roll forward, with increasing volume to the end of time, and thus become instrumental in the salvation of millions of deathless souls.

And is there no church that for such a reward, and ample pay in hand, will come up to their high privilege and duty?

"Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee the light." "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise; redeeming the time, for the days are evil."

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slidings. But the piety of Jackson continually repaired its benignant beams at the fountain of divine light and purity, becoming brighter and brighter into the perfect day. His nature grew more unselfish, his aims more noble, his spirit more heavenly, while his eager feet ran with ever hastening speed and joy the way of godliness to its close. And his end, sustained by the peaceful triumphs of faith, was rather a translation than a death.—D. B. May.

Remarkable Examples of Bible Reading.

Many of the anecdotes comprised within the following paragraph are easy to verify; and every reader acknowledges the value of the facts which they are intended to illustrate.

Remarkable as these are, they are not approaches what is related, and earnestly believed in the East of Asia.

One approaches what is related, and earnestly believed in the East of Asia, during his confinement in the prison of Bagdad, where he died, he read over the Koran seven thousand times.

That we may see—says Dr. Pinnmer—what can be done in becoming acquainted with the Bible, let us look at a few facts. Eusebius tells us of one who had his eyes burned out in the Diocletian persecution, and who repeated in a public assembly the very words of Scripture with as much accuracy as if he had been reading them.

Jerome says of Neoplaton, the great reading and meditation he made of a soul a library of Christ. The younger, was so familiar with the word of God, that he made it a subject of conversation with the old Bishop, as if he had been one of them. Augustine says that after his conversion he ceased to read even Cicero, his former favorite author, and that the Scriptures were his pure delight. Tertullian spent a greater part of his time in reading the Scriptures, and committed large portions of them to memory. In his youth, Beza learned all Paul's Epistles in Greek so thoroughly, that when he was eight years old, he could repeat them in that language. Cranmer is said to have been able to repeat the New Testament from memory. Luther was one of the most indefatigable students of the Bible that the world has ever seen. Ridley said: "The walls and trees of my orchard, could they speak, would bear witness that there I learned by heart almost all of the Epistles of which study, although in time a great part was lost, yet the sweet savour thereof, I trust, I shall carry with me to heaven." Sir John Harpoc, a man of many cares, made the book of so much his study, that it lay by him night and day. A French nobleman used to read three chapters of the Bible every day on his bended knees, with his head uncovered. Joshua Barnes is said to have read a small pocket Bible a hundred and twenty times over. Roger Cotton read the whole Bible through twelve times a year. William Romaine studied nothing but the Bible for the last thirty or forty years of his life. John Boyse, one of the translators of our Bible, had read all the Scriptures before he was five years old; his mother read them through twelve times. I have read of more than one of whom it was said, that if the Bible had been lost, the whole might have been recovered from their memories. In short, was there ever an eminent Christian who was not remarkable for his study of the Scripture as he had opportunity?—*Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*.

"A Sure Foundation"

"In Zion, therefore, with the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste."

Thus God spoke to the people of Jerusalem of his Son, and the great salvation to be accomplished and secured by him. Thus the only refuge of safety was pointed out to them. Eighteen hundred years ago, by the death of Christ, the sure foundation of which Isaiah spoke was laid in Zion. The best foundation on which a building can be erected is a foundation of stone. He who builds upon the rock has a sure foundation for his house. Such a foundation for the sinner's hope is the Lord Jesus Christ. The language of the text above quoted would have great force if it were by the Lord's people.

In whatever direction they looked, they beheld the strongholds of the foundations great. As the disciples said, "With doubt, the Jews could not believe."

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